

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 165080

72

ORIGIN AF-18

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 CAB-09 CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00 EB-11

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY GABORONE

AMEMBASSY MBABANE

AMEMBASSY MASERU

INFO AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ETRN, BC, LT, WZ, SF, MI, ZA

SUBJECT: AIA ACTIVITIES IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

REF: A. STATE 141179 NOTAL

B. GABORONE A-94 NOTAL

C. MASERU 800 NOTAL

D. MBABANE 1376 NOTAL

1. PRESIDENT N. BERGT AND BOARD CHAIRMAN JAMES MAGOFFIN HAVE BOTH DISCUSSED FUTURE PLANS OF ALASKA INTERNATIONAL AIR (AIA) IN SOUTHERN AFRICA WITH DEPARTMENT SINCE RECENT VISIT BY MAGOFFIN TO AREA TO EXPLORE POTENTIAL FOR EXPANSION OF AIA'S ACTIVITIES THERE (REFTEL A).

2. BOTH BERGT AND MAGOFFIN SEE OUTLOOK FOR AIA ORGANIZATION  
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PAGE 02 STATE 165080

OF REGIONAL BLS AIRLINE AS NOT GOOD AT THIS TIME. MAGOFFIN

SAID THAT HE FOUND BOTSWANA GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS COOL AND LEERY OF ANY ENTERPRISE INVOLVING FINANCIAL LIABILITY ON PART OF GOB, HAVING BEEN STUNG TWICE. COOPERATIVE VENTURE WITH OTHER PRIVATE OPERATORS IN BOTSWANA - SOUTH AFRICAN AIRWAYS, PROTEA, OR ESQUIRE - WOULD BE VERY DIFFICULT FOR AIA.

3. MAGOFFIN SAID THAT AIA ASSISTANT FRED BRAUCH, WHO VISITED SWAZILAND, FOUND SWAZI OFFICIALS NOT INTERESTED IN A REGIONAL BLS AIRLINE, BUT FILLED WITH GRANDIOSE IDEAS ABOUT

A SWAZI NATIONAL AIRLINE WHICH MAGOFFIN FINDS INFEASIBLE. MAGOFFIN SAID BRAUCH HAD FOUND SWAZI OFFICIALS DISCONTENTED WITH SWAZI AIR, SOUTH AFRICAN-OWNED AIRLINE PRESENTLY OPERATING IN SWAZILAND.

4. BRAUCH HAD ALSO VISITED LESOTHO, BUT AIA FEELS THAT LESOTHO HAS NOTHING TO CONTRIBUTE, EITHER IN FUNDS OR TRAFFIC, TO MAKE IT INTERESTING AS A POTENTIAL PARTICIPANT IN A REGIONAL AIRLINE.

5. PROSPECTS FOR IMMEDIATE AIA ACTIVITY IN ATTEMPTING TO ORGANIZE REGIONAL BLS AIRLINE THUS APPEAR VERY DIM AT THIS TIME. AIA DOES PLAN TO CONTINUE ITS PROFITABLE HAULING OF MEAT AND MINING MACHINERY FROM BOTSWANA TO ZAMBIA. (BERGT SAYS THAT ZAMBIA HAS NOW CLOSED TRUCK ROUTE ACROSS RHODESIA.) AIA ALSO HAS BEGUN CARRYING MEAT FROM SWAZILAND TO ZAMBIA AND IS PRESENTLY SEEKING OVERFLIGHT RIGHTS FROM SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT TO GO DIRECTLY FROM MATSAPA TO LUSAKA WITHOUT TRANSITING JOHANNESBURG, WITH HELP OF SA-BASED FREIGHT SERVICES LTD. (OWNED BY ANGLO-AMERICAN). AIA PLANS ADD THREE HERCULES AIRCRAFT TO THEIR FLEET IN SOUTHERN AFRICA IF THESE ACTIVITIES CONTINUE TO EXPAND BUT CONSIDERS BLS REGIONAL AIRLINE IDEA SHELVED FOR TIME BEING.  
ROGERS

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